

## **South Spring Valley and Hamblin Valley Watershed Restoration Plan Public Scoping Information**

**Public Scoping Period:** March 23 – April 23, 2012

**Public Meetings:**

Tuesday, April 3, 2012 – BLM Caliente Field Office, U.S. Highway 93, Building #1, Caliente, NV

Wednesday, April 4, 2012 – Baker Senior Center, 100 Elko St., Baker, NV

**Contact:** Gloria Tibbetts, Planning and Environmental Coordinator  
BLM Ely District Office,  
702 N. Industrial Blvd., HC33 Box 33500  
Ely, NV 89301  
(775) 289-1825  
[gtibbetts@blm.gov](mailto:gtibbetts@blm.gov)

**Purpose and Need for the Proposal:**

The purpose and need for the proposal is to achieve the following objectives:

- Move the landscape within the South Spring Valley and Hamblin Valley Watersheds toward Fire Regime Condition Class (FRCC) 1 with a mosaic of seral stages attaining the potential cover percentages of grasses and forbs for the respective biophysical models.
- Improve habitat for all wildlife, especially sage grouse and big game species.
- Achieve better distribution for livestock and wildlife, and improve overall rangeland health.

### **PROPOSED ACTION**

#### **Vegetation Treatments**

Treatment units within the South Spring Valley and Hamblin Valley Watersheds have been selected based on the purpose and need and additional unit-specific objectives. Treatment methods would be selected based conditions at the time of treatment and other limitations including topography and wilderness limitations. Treatment methods may include, but are not limited to, chaining, mastication, hand cutting, mowing, roller chopper, other mechanical methods, chemical treatments, prescribed fire, fire for resource benefit, fencing, or seeding. Please see attached map: Vegetation Treatment Units - Proposed Action.

#### **Seeding Management Plan**

During the late 1950s through the early 1970s, several rangeland seeding projects were established in South Spring and Hamblin Valleys. The intent of these projects was to provide for increased livestock grazing forage. Long-term management of these projects has not been established. Under the Proposed Action, these seeding projects, or portions thereof, may be treated when average shrub cover exceeds 35 percent or average tree cover exceeds 20 percent, or when shrub cover falls below 10 percent. Average sagebrush cover following treatment shall be within 15 and 25 percent of sagebrush cover for nesting sage grouse. Treatment methods will be determined on an individual treatment basis and could

include, but are not limited to, mowing, chaining, other mechanical treatments, prescribed fire, chemical treatments, and/or re-seeding. Please see attached map: Seeding Management Plan.

## **Range Improvements**

### Authorization of Maintenance and Reconstruction of Existing Range Improvements

All existing fences, corrals, pipelines, troughs, wells, reservoirs, and cattleguards would be authorized for maintenance and reconstruction within previously disturbed areas. New disturbance areas are proposed separately and would be analyzed in the environmental assessment.

### New Pipeline and Fence Construction

New pipelines are proposed at three springs (Willow Tub Spring, Rattlesnake Spring, and Whiskey Spring) and would carry water away from the riparian area to a new trough for livestock and wildlife. The Lime Well Pipeline is another new pipeline with two proposed troughs. New fencing is proposed along the boundary of the Willow Springs Allotment to prevent livestock from drifting into the neighboring South Spring Valley Allotment.

Another fence is proposed in the south portion of Hamblin Valley to prevent overuse of a large area of winterfat in the valley bottom. Please see attached map: Range Improvements – Existing and Proposed

## **Travel Management**

The existing network of roads has been evaluated for redundancy and impacts on other resources including cultural resources and sage grouse and big game habitat. Two alternatives are provided showing potential road closures throughout South Spring and Hamblin Valleys. Please see attached maps: Travel Management Plan – Proposed Action and Travel Management Plan - Alternative B

## **Guzzler Maintenance**

There are several existing guzzlers located throughout South Spring Valley and Hamblin Valley Watersheds that need to be periodically maintained. The proposed action would allow access and maintenance activities at all existing guzzlers. Please see attached map: Guzzlers, Erosion Areas, and Riparian Area Improvements

## **Riparian Area Repairs**

Several springs have been identified for treatments that would improve the health and function of the riparian systems. Treatments may include, but are not limited to, exclosure fencing (new or repairs to existing), pipelines, troughs outside of the riparian areas, and removal of pinyon pine and juniper trees. Please see attached map: Guzzlers, Erosion Areas, and Riparian Area Improvements

## **Erosion Repairs**

Two locations have been identified for repair of eroded roadways. Repairs could include placement of a culvert under the current roadway and/or reroute of the existing roadway to a more desirable alignment. Please see attached map: Guzzlers, Erosion Areas, and Riparian Area Improvements